

**SUMMARY OF THE  
ON-SITE ASSESSMENT COMMITTEE MEETING  
OCTOBER 18, 2000**

The On-site Assessment Committee of the National Environmental Laboratory Accreditation Conference (NELAC) met by teleconference on Wednesday, October 18, 2000, at 1:00 p.m. Eastern Daylight Time (EDT). In the absence of the committee's chair, Mr. William Ingersoll, the meeting was led by Mr. Richard Sheibley of the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection. A list of action items resulting from the meeting is given in Attachment A. A list of participants is given in Attachment B. *The purpose of the meeting was to decide which version of Appendices A, B-1, and B-2 will be presented for discussion at the upcoming Sixth NELAC Interim Meeting (NELAC 6i).*

**INTRODUCTION**

The committee was joined by Dr. Margo Hunt of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) representing the Appendix A subcommittee. Mr. Sheibley called the meeting to order with a brief review of the committee's October 4 teleconference minutes, which were approved as written. He then directed the committee's attention to Appendices A and B-2, which had been distributed electronically prior to the meeting.

**APPENDIX A (BASIC TRAINING) SUBCOMMITTEE UPDATE**

Dr. Hunt reported that she had recently distributed to committee members the last of the eleven basic assessor training units constituting Appendix A. In subsequent discussion it was suggested that the Appendix be modified to include sections on data auditing, unethical laboratory activities, and a mock laboratory inspection. Committee members suggested that the level of detail necessary in data auditing is at the heart of current assessor consistency issues and should be addressed in assessor training. There was discussion of whether data auditing is more appropriate to a technical training course. In response, committee members suggested using a relatively simple chemistry methodology, such as pH, as a "universal example." In discussion of unethical laboratory activities, it was noted that only the most blatant offenses are detected and that detection of unethical laboratory activities should appear as a bullet under data auditing. There was considerable discussion of how long it would take to present the additional modules. Committee members noted that it is not necessary for the entire training course to consist of classroom instruction. There was also considerable discussion of the amount of training necessary for NELAC assessors with general agreement that the historical minimum is not adequate. Committee members noted that the NELAC process is improving the system in steps. After much discussion, the committee reached consensus that Appendix A will be presented as prepared by Dr. Kenneth Jackson and Dr. Hunt with additional place-holders as follows:

- C      Data Auditing
- <      Detection of Unethical Laboratory Activities
- C      Mock Inspection

## **APPENDIX B-1 (STANDARD FOR TECHNICAL TRAINING COURSES)**

Mr. Sheibley noted that Appendix B-1 has not yet been fleshed out. In subsequent discussion it was suggested that the appendix include a list of goals for technical courses. Among the committee's suggested goals were the following:

- C Quality Systems (or principles) of technology or technique
- C Critical Aspects (calibrations, tuning, etc.) of technology or technique
- C Major sources of error associated with technology or technique
- C Key Quality Control (QC) activities associated with technology or technique

Mr. David Friedman volunteered to modify Appendix B-1 consistent with the committee discussion.

## **APPENDIX B-2 (STANDARD FOR CRITICAL PERFORMANCE ELEMENTS OF TEST METHODS)**

The committee noted that the purpose of Appendix B-2 has become a response to audit consistency issues. They noted that the critical elements defined in Appendix B-2 need to be 1) documented in laboratory Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs), 2) verified by observation of techniques to assess the technical performance of the method, and 3) verified by data to assure that QC results are in compliance with method requirements. In subsequent discussion the committee noted that Proficiency Testing (PT) results had been removed from the test method performance critical elements. While PT results are a part of the initial demonstration of capability, they are reviewed independently of test method and are not part of the laboratory's written SOPs or Quality Manual. It was suggested that the committee strengthen references to raw data to allow reconstruction of the final results. There was also discussion of data quality objectives (DQOs) as an approach to produce data of known and documented quality. One committee member noted that DQOs are outside the production of data and that knowing the DQOs for a method does not improve data quality. The committee agreed to drop the reference to DQOs as an approach to the generation of data of known quality. After moderate discussion, Ms. Rosanna Buhl volunteered to draft modifications to Appendix B-2 based on committee discussion.

## **CONCLUSION**

As the meeting drew to a close, the committee agreed to meet for breakfast before their working session at NELAC 6i. The committee's next meeting will be a face-to-face meeting on Tuesday, October 31. The meeting was adjourned as the allotted time for the teleconference expired at 2:30 p.m. EDT.

**ACTION ITEMS**  
**ON-SITE ASSESSMENT COMMITTEE MEETING**  
**OCTOBER 18, 2000**

<b>Item No.</b>	<b>Action</b>	<b>Responsible Member</b>	<b>Date to be Completed</b>
1.	Committee will present Appendices A, B-1, and B-2 (as modified by committee consensus) to Conference at Sixth NELAC Interim Meeting	All	10/31/00
2.	Modify Appendix B-1 consistent with discussion.	Mr. Friedman	

**PARTICIPANTS  
ON-SITE ASSESSMENT COMMITTEE MEETING  
OCTOBER 18, 2000**

<b>Name</b>	<b>Affiliation</b>	<b>Phone/Fax/E-mail</b>
Ingersoll, William Chair (absent)	US Navy	T: 843-764-7337 F: 843-764-7360 E: IngersollWS@navsea.navy.mil
Buhl, Rosanna	Battelle Duxbury Operations	T: 781-952-5309 F: 781-934-2124 E: buhl@battelle.org
Dyer, Charles (absent)	NH Dept of Environmental Services	T: 603-271-2991 F: 603-271-2867 E: c_dyer@des.state.nh.us
Friedman, David	USEPA	T: 202-564-6662 F: 202-565-2432 E: friedman.david@epa.gov
Hall, Jack (absent)	Interpretive Consulting	T: 865-576-4138 F: E: scl3883@aol.com
Moore, Marlene (absent)	Advanced Systems, Inc.	T: 302-834-9796 F: 302-995-1086 E: mmoore@advancedsys.com
Sheibley, Richard	PA Dept of Env Protection	T: 717-787-4669 F: 717-783-1502 E: sheibley.richard@dep.state.pa.us
Sotomayor, Alfredo	WI Dept of Natural Resources	T: 608-226-9257 F: 608-267-5231 E: sotoma@dnr.state.wi.us
Uhlfelder, Mimi (absent)	Severn Trent Laboratories (STL Baltimore)	T: 410-771-4920 F: 410-771-4407 E: muhlfelder@stl-inc.com
Urra, Santos (absent)	City of Austin	T: 512-927-4027 F: 512-927-4038 E: santos.urra@ci.austin.tx.us
Slayton, Joseph (Board Liaison)	USEPA	T: 410-305-2653 F: 410-305-3095 E: slayton.joe@epa.gov

**PARTICIPANTS  
ON-SITE ASSESSMENT COMMITTEE MEETING  
OCTOBER 18, 2000**

<b>Name</b>	<b>Affiliation</b>	<b>Phone/Fax/E-mail</b>
Hunt, Margo (Invited Guest)	USEPA/ORD/QAD	T: 202-564-6457 F: 202-565-2441 E: hunt.margo@epamail.epa.gov
Greene, Lisa (Contractor Support)	Research Triangle Institute	T: 919-541-7483 F: 919-541-7386 E: lcg@rti.org